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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MANAMA 000484

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DS/IP/NEA, DS/ITA, DS/ATA, S/CT AND NEA/ARPI
RIYADH FOR LEGATT
FBI FOR JOHN PISTOLE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR; WILLIE HULON, DEPUTY
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR; TOM HARRINGTON, DEPUTY ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONAL SUPPORT; GARY BALD, EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CT; FRANK BATTLE OPERATIONS RESPONSE
SECTION

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/29/2015

TAGS: ASEC BA PTER

SUBJECT: BAHRAIN MOVES FORWARD WITH JOINT COUNTER TERRORISM
CENTER

REF: MANAMA 435

Classified By: AMBASSADOR WILLIAM T. MONROE FOR REASONS 1.4 (b)

¶1. (C) Summary. An FBI-led team's March 19-22 visit to Bahrain successfully kick-started Bahrain's effort to establish a Joint Counter Terrorism Center (JCTC) within the next two-four months. Most notably, Minister of Interior (MOI) Shaikh Rashid pulled in senior leaders from CT-related agencies, including the Bahrain National Security Agency (BNSA) and the Bahrain Defense Forces (BDF), for a review of the FBI presentation as well as MOI's plan, apparently gaining their endorsement of the JCTC. Former Ambassador to the U.S. Shaikh Khalifa, now Deputy Director at BNSA, was deeply involved in all of the discussions and appeared to play a helpful role. Embassy greatly appreciates the support given to this effort by the FBI National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF); as well as the Legatt office in Riyadh. End summary.

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How It All Started
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¶2. (C) Chief of Public Security Major General Latif Al Zayani requested embassy support from RSO (by letter) to establish a CT Center in Manama in August 2004. RSO contacted DS/ATA and S/CT to seek guidance and support for the venture. Both groups endorsed the concept but could not provide material support. Legatt Riyadh Fred Brink was contacted and provided a copy of the letter from MG Zayani. In further discussions, RSO and Legatt determined the proposed Bahrain CT Center closely resembled an FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and met many of the requirements for organization, training, equipment and personnel. Legatt Riyadh contacted the NJTTF to request a training visit to Manama to provide guidance and direction to the Ministry of Interior in their pursuit of a CT Center.

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The Initial Meetings
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¶3. (C) The FBI team arrived in Manama on March 17 and conducted briefings on March 19 and 20 to senior MOI and NSA personnel, including Chief of Public Security MG Zayani and NSA Undersecretary Shaikh Khalifa Al Khalifa (recently former Ambassador to the U.S.). The lengthy discussions were productive and produced a vibrant dialog between the US and Bahraini participants. Major General Zayani and Shaikh Al Khalifa were impressed with the specific information provided on personnel selection, equipment needs and the absolute requirement by CT Center staff for dedication to the mission. Each major participating agency; MOI, NSA, Bahrain Defense Forces and National Guard; is required to support the goals and objectives of the CT Center to ensure national security for Bahrain.

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The Big Meeting
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¶4. (C) Minister of Interior Shaikh Rashid Al Khalifa called together the Director of the National Security Agency Shaikh Abdul Aziz Al Khalifa and Chief of Staff Bahrain Defense Forces Shaikh Daij Al Khalifa on March 21 for a briefing by the FBI team and a review of the MOI plan for establishment of a JCTC. Major General Zayani opened the meeting by discussing the need for a coordinated CT Center utilizing the assets of MOI, NSA, BDF, the National Guard, etc. into a cohesive unit to deter, investigate and prosecute terrorist crimes. FBI NJTTF Supervisor Rodger Morrison then provided an overview of how the 100 JTTF offices in the US are organized, staffed, equipped and led. An MOI presenter narrated the concept of operations for the CT Center. The MOI vision is that each GCC country would create its own JCTC, and those country JCTC's would eventually be linked to

a Manama-based regional center with representation from each GCC country. The explosive attack in Qatar March 19 was a sobering reminder to the attendees of the need to quickly and accurately share terrorism information in Bahrain and throughout the GCC. Agent Morrison concluded the FBI presentation with "best practices" used by the NJTTF and the 100 JTTF offices in the US.

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Walk First
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15. (C) The initial plan is to open the JCTC at MOI headquarters with a small staff from NSA, MOI, BDF, the National Guard and Customs. The Director of the JCTC is expected to be an NSA officer at the rank of Colonel with the Deputy Director from MOI at Lieutenant Colonel rank. The Director will report to the Chief of Public Security Major General Zayani. The JCTC will consist of an Intelligence Analysis Cell, Contingency Plans and Operations Cell, and Protective Security Cell supported by officers from Criminal Investigations Division, Coast Guard, Special Forces, Customs, Immigration, BDF, National Guard, Attorney General, Civil Aviation and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) used by the FBI JTTF was provided and will be employed as the template for ensuring the cooperation of participating ministries. MOI already modified the document and had it cleared by their legal department. The MOI plans to have the JCTC operational on a small scale in 2-4 months. The equipment list provided by the FBI team will serve as a baseline for acquiring the necessities to begin operations.

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Principle Responsibilities
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16. (C) The MOI JCTC presentation offered the following mission statement: The mission of the JCTC is to prevent a terrorist attack in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The principle responsibilities of the JCTC are to liaise with national, regional and international agencies to exchange information and operational techniques; call regular meetings with national ministries and agencies to share relevant information and update contingency plans; ensure training and exercises take place; ensure the Kingdom has the proper equipment for every level of threat; and establish and organization within the MOI to be the focal point for the prevention of a terrorist attack in Bahrain.

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Where We Go From Here
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17. (C) The Minister of Interior will hold a meeting on March 30 with the Director NSA, Chief of Staff BDF, and Chief of the National Guard to elicit their further support to create the JCTC. The next step is to identify the JCTC director, deputy director and skeleton staff. The documents provided by the FBI team specifically identify the next sequential steps to be taken by the MOI to establish the JCTC. Milestones have been identified for the MOI to meet in order for progress to be measured. Based on the MOI's progress, RSO will advise the FBI team on MOI progress and the need to revisit Bahrain and provide additional assistance. Bahrain will likely open the first international CT Center organized by DS and the FBI, fitting the JTTF mold. The Bahraini vision, as presented to the GCC countries at the Riyadh, Saudi Arabia security conference in February 2005, is to create a JCTC in each country and later establish a regional JCTC in Manama.

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Thanks To All
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18. (C) Post is extremely grateful to the LEGAT Fred Brink and A/LEGAT Martin Reardon in Riyadh and the FBI NJTTF personnel Rodger Morrison, Richard Teahan, Michael Reilly, Harlan Bell and Terry Coward who traveled to Manama. Their efforts provided the spark from which the JCTC shall begin. DS and FBI leaders endorsed the program, recognizing the long-term benefits of information sharing and coordinated effort in the GWOT.
MONROE